UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/52/667
12 November 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fifty-second session
Agenda items 98 (c) and 116

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: PROTECTION OF GLOBAL CLIMATE FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF MANKIND

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1998-1999

Administrative and conference-servicing support by the United Nations to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Note by the Secretary-General

1. This note is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 50/115 of 20 December 1995, by which the Secretary-General was requested to report to the Assembly, at its fifty-second session, on the result of the review of the arrangements established in 1996 for providing the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change with conference services and the Convention secretariat with administrative services, in support of their activities.

2. The review of the administrative arrangements has been initiated and is expected to be finalized in 1998. Its outcome will be reported to the Assembly at its fifty-third session.

3. As regards conference services, it is the intention of the United Nations Secretariat to continue providing such services to the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies during the biennium 1998-1999 under the same arrangements that have been effected for the current biennium in accordance with Assembly resolution 50/115.

Administrative arrangements

4. The administrative arrangements provide for a large delegation of authority on personnel and financial matters, including procurement, from the Secretary-General to the Executive Secretary of the Convention secretariat.

5. The arrangements include the provision to the Convention secretariat by the United Nations of financial support, in particular payroll and accounting, recruitment and personnel administration services, as well as specialized services such as post classification, auditing of accounts and oversight services. At the same time, following the relocation of the Convention secretariat to Bonn, Germany, the United Nations has been assisting the Convention secretariat in the development of an adequate local administrative capacity.

6. The administrative support is provided to the Convention secretariat on a reimbursable basis by charging a 13 per cent levy on the actual expenditures incurred for the functioning and operations of the Convention secretariat and its programme of activities. Six posts in the Administrative Unit of the Convention secretariat in Bonn are currently financed from these charges.

7. As requested by the Assembly in its resolution 50/115, a review of the administrative arrangements has been recently initiated. It is being conducted jointly by the Secretariat of the United Nations and the Convention secretariat. The review is expected to be finalized in 1998, and its full outcome will be submitted to the Assembly at its fifty-third session.

8. As a result of the evaluation of the local administrative capacity of the Convention secretariat, undertaken in the context of the ongoing review, it was agreed to entrust the Convention secretariat with the responsibility of additional administrative tasks. Currently the Convention secretariat directly exercises a number of financial, personnel and common support actions that do not require substantial specialized capacity, such as processing of contributions, allotments and local payments, short-term appointments of staff and local consultants, staff relations, procurement and inventory, administration of travel and relating advances. The United Nations Office at Geneva continues to provide policy guidance and final clearance of these administrative actions.

Conference services arrangements

9. By its resolution 50/115, the Assembly decided to include in the United Nations calendar of conferences and meetings for 1996-1997 the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies, totalling 12 weeks of conference-servicing time. The servicing of these meetings was provided at the United Nations premises in Geneva during 1996 and at the new headquarters of the Convention secretariat in Bonn during 1997. The costs of the meetings were financed from the United Nations regular budget for the 1996-1997 biennium.

10. In response to resolution 50/115, arrangements have also been made for the inclusion in the United Nations calendar of conferences and meetings for the

biennium 1998-1999 of the meetings of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies scheduled to be convened during that period. The meetings would continue to be serviced by the United Nations Office at Geneva and would be held in Bonn, unless the Conference of the Parties decides otherwise.